

The *World Socialist Web Site*, the fight against imperialism and for socialism in the Middle East

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The WSWS is beginning to publish the speeches delivered by leading members of the ICFI and contributors to the WSWS at the online rally held October 25 to welcome the relaunching of the WSWS that began with the postings of October 2, 2020. The remarks below were given by Ula? Ate?çi, on behalf of the Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu in Turkey.

In the name of the Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu (Socialist Equality Group), in political solidarity with the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), it is a great honor to have the opportunity to speak to this online rally to celebrate the relaunch of the *World Socialist Web Site* (WSWS).

Iskra, which began publication under Vladimir Lenin in 1900 with the slogan, “From a spark a fire will flare up,” represented a critical milestone in the political education of the Russian working class and the building of an independent Marxist party before the 1917 Revolution. The relaunch of the WSWS will be remembered as a critical turning point in the political education of the global working class and the building of the political leadership it needs in the decade of the socialist revolution. Behind this step, which reflects the ICFI’s highly conscious political response to the changes in the objective situation, lies the historical, political and cultural accumulation and continuity of the Marxist movement for more than 170 years.

In fact, the launch of the *World Socialist Web Site* in 1998 played a decisive role in making it possible for our group to be here today as we seek to build a section of the ICFI in Turkey. As Comrade David North explained in the welcoming announcement of the relaunch of the WSWS, after the ICFI “seized the opportunity to utilize a technology that would make

possible a more favorable alignment between the power of our Marxist-Trotskyist ideas and the size of our audience,” this historic step found a response around the world. This included in Turkey.

Comrade Halil Çelik, the founder and leader of Sosyalist E?itlik whom we lost tragically at the end of 2018, first met the WSWS in 1999. This encounter made it possible for his group to access the ICFI’s documents in the following years. Our group was able to conduct a political struggle against Pabloism and various kinds of national opportunism in Turkey only based on these historical traditions of the world Trotskyist movement.

As Comrade Peter Schwarz explained in his obituary for Comrade Halil, the WSWS made us understand that “the development of the Trotskyist movement in Turkey can take place only on the basis of revolutionary internationalism and requires a thorough understanding of the strategic experiences of the international working class in the course of the 20th century.”

Today, insisting upon the complete independence of the international working class from imperialism and all factions of the bourgeoisie, the WSWS is followed with growing interest among the advanced sections of workers, youth and intellectuals in Turkey. Moreover, the WSWS is a website whose analysis and commentary on the developments across the world, and especially in the Middle East, are closely followed and frequently referenced by bourgeois newspapers and pseudoleft publications in Turkey. Undoubtedly, what they do not specifically mention is that the WSWS is not an “independent” news source but the political organ of the International Committee of the Fourth

International.

The political influence and prestige that the WSWS has in this region is not limited to Turkey. Its irreconcilable and principled opposition to the US-led imperialist wars of aggression against Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, as well as NATO's regime-change wars against Libya and Syria since 2011, the relentless imperialist war threats against Iran and near-genocidal war against Yemen have made it highly respected among the working class and oppressed masses throughout the region.

In fact, no other international media organization besides the WSWS has such a rightful reputation. While the middle-class leaderships of the former antiwar protest movements shifted to the right after the Iraq war in 2003, becoming pseudoleft supporters of imperialist interventions against Libya and Syria in 2011, the WSWS alone categorically opposed this imperialist barbarism that killed or wounded millions and displaced millions more across the region, and led the struggle to build an antiwar socialist movement based on the international working class.

Today, the *World Socialist Web Site* is the main instrument of the struggle to arm and mobilize the working class with an internationalist and socialist perspective on the conflicts in the eastern Mediterranean and the Caucasus, or the US war preparations against Russia and Iran, which each could trigger a world war.

Our political opponents also testify to the prestige of the WSWS in the region and all over the world. When the *World Socialist Web Site* welcomed the working class opposition to Iran's government and opposed the state repression at the end of 2017, Ramin Mazaheri, a journalist and an apologist of "Islamic socialism" and the Islamic Republic in Iran, expressed admiration for the *World Socialist Web Site* even as he opposed the principled attitude taken by the WSWS. He called it "a darn great site," "exceptional in most every way," "perhaps the most-widely visited truly leftist web site" and one that is "adored in the Third World," and "deservedly-appreciated site around the world."

Despite the social and economic devastation of the past 30 years of imperialist wars across the Middle East, millions of people from across the region have joined the ranks of the international proletariat as a result of the globalization of production in the same

period. This young proletariat will find in the *World Socialist Web Site* the political weapons it needs in the struggle for international socialism, against imperialism and the reactionary bourgeois regimes in the region during this decade of the socialist revolution that we have entered.

I would like to take this occasion to urge our readers to take action and join us to expand the publication of the WSWS in Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic, Persian and other languages spoken across the region, in order to grow its readership and build sections of the ICFI across the Middle East.



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